United Nations S/2018/66

Security Council

Distr.: General
25 January 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 24 January 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that, under the Presidency of the State of Kuwait, the Security Council plans to hold an open debate on Tuesday, 6 February 2018, on the working methods of the Security Council under the item entitled, "Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)".

In order to help guide the debate, the State of Kuwait has prepared the attached concept note (see annex). I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mansour A. **Alotaibi**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
State of Kuwait to the United Nations

18-01215 (E) 300118

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 24 January 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Concept note

Open debate on the working methods of the Security Council

6 February 2018

I. Introduction

1. On 30 June 1993, the Security Council adopted the first note by the President concerning the working methods of the Council (S/26015). The document contained several proposals aimed at enhancing the Council's working methods, including: the inclusion of the provisional agenda for public meetings of the Council in the *Journal of the United Nations*; changes to the format of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly; and approval of presidential statements to include agreed formulation of subject matter under which each statement is authorized. In the following years, the Council adopted numerous notes by the President and presidential statements related to the Council's documentation and other procedural questions following intensive work undertaken by the Informal Working Group of the Security Council on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

2. The State of Kuwait will assume the Chairmanship of the Informal Working Group during its membership on the Council starting on 1 January 2018 and ending 31 December 2019, and an open debate concerning the working methods of the Council, which is to be convened under the item entitled "Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)" will be one of the most notable themes during its membership.

II. Objectives

3. Steady progress to improve the working methods of the Security Council was made in the 1990s and early 2000s, mainly through the work of the Informal Working Group, in cooperation with permanent members and non-permanent members during their membership, as well as through practical proposals submitted by the wider membership in their national capacities or on behalf of regional or subregional groups, and these improvements are fully documented in the form of presidential statements.

4. In the period between the issuance of the note by the President of the Security Council on 26 July 2010 (S/2010/507) and the issuance of the revised note on 30 August 2017 (S/2017/507), 13 separate notes were issued as follows:

2012: S/2012/402, S/2012/922 and S/2012/937

2013: S/2013/515 and S/2013/630

2014: S/2014/268, S/2014/393, S/2014/565, S/2014/739 and S/2014/739/Corr.1, and S/2014/922

2015: S/2015/944

2016: S/2016/619 and S/2016/170

5. The note issued on 30 August 2017 (S/2017/507) incorporates measures agreed to by the Security Council concerning its working methods and contained in the 13 other presidential notes adopted after the issuance of the note by the President of 26 July 2010 (S/2010/507). The 13 notes include the contributions of the Informal Working Group under the chairmanships of Portugal (2012); Argentina (2013–2014); Angola (2015); and Japan (2016).

6. By holding this open debate, the State of Kuwait aims to afford all Member States the opportunity to provide practical proposals that contribute to enhancing the efficiency of the working methods of the Security Council, thus enabling the Council to better fulfil its obligations in maintaining international peace and security with a large measure of effectiveness and competency, as well as implementing its resolutions, consistent with what is stated in paragraph 100 of the most recent note by the President of the Security Council on this subject (S/2017/507).

III. Indicative discussion points for the debate

7. It is important for the Security Council to conduct constructive debates on its working methods continuously and periodically. Furthermore, providing non-member States with the opportunity to participate in such debates should be considered positively. This has proven to be successful in the manner in which the Council interacts with the general membership of the United Nations.

8. The open debate concerning the working methods of the Security Council can be oriented towards capturing the views of the broader membership with respect to areas for possible improvement, and the following are some elements that may assist Member States in preparing their statements:

(a) Referring to the most recent note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507), which contains important updates related to issues linked to the work of the Council and its working methods, such as the format of the sessions, the list of items of which the Council is seized and the question of delivering statements, as well as the commitment of Council members to implementing measures concerning newly elected members, including the preparation of newly elected members, the selection of Chairs of subsidiary organs and the preparation of Chairs of subsidiary organs;

(b) Emphasizing the progress achieved in the implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507) with regard to encouraging non-permanent members on the Council to assume the task of formulating the resolutions of the Council, as co-penholders;

(c) Stressing the importance of fostering the tendency to hold open meetings, including briefings and general debates;

(d) Finding a role in the decision-making process for concerned States on issues discussed by the Council, and being involved in its informal consultations, in accordance with Article 31 of the Charter of the United Nations;

(e) Enhancing transparency in the work of the Council, and encouraging the flow of information to and from its non-member States.

IV. Outcome

9. It is unlikely that a document will be issued immediately after the open debate. However, the State of Kuwait, in its capacity as Chair of the Informal Working Group, intends to follow up on the interventions of the open debate, especially with respect to specific practical proposals put forward during the debate, through the deliberations of the Informal Working Group, as part of ongoing efforts to improve the working methods of the Security Council.